

07/23/92

SHORTGRASS COUNTRY by Monte Noelke

The internal parasite hatch in the Shortgrass Country looks like the best crop in years. Grand discoveries have been made in medications; nevertheless, the price has risen from a few cents a dose to a big stack of coins, like nearly six-bits a shot for a mother ewe.

Science has improved the accuracy of diagnosing stomach worms by analyzing fecal samples under a microscope at the vet clinics. However, in some cases the infestation hits so fast the symptoms of acute anemia are enough evidence. Big congregations of vultures are another sign of trouble. However, modern buzzards are a little deceiving. Because they stay so full from coyote depredations, they don't just pounce on every type of carcass found on the rangelands.

As was reported once before, the city water over in San Angelo is the best drench, or pour-on we've found to control internal parasites, especially when the Wool Capital's lakes are low. Mixed one part to 10 parts of well water and administered at one ounce per 100 pounds of body weight, it'll clean up a bunch of sick sheep faster and longer than any drug on the market.

Cowboys fuss about spilling the stuff on their chaps and boots. But after they become accustomed to the odor,

they don't fuss too much, especially after they see the results of the water-on-water drench.

We aren't the only ranch operation doing research on the subject. My bother claims an outfit out west has broken the parasite cycle by adding an ultra detergent to their mineral supplement. The way the report sounds, 2.5 pounds of detergent to a ton of loose mineral will unwind a clump of barber pole worms so quick it'll make them look harmless as a strand of grass falling off a hula-hula skirt.

The risk of using the municipal water recipe and the soap powders is too great. Both are powerful chemicals, and haven't been approved by the FDA. I suggested that my brother test the detergent in a few pastures and use the \$1000 to \$1500 dollars he spends on approved drench to play our new state lottery.

Handicappers claim the chance of winning the million dollar lottery jackpot is 46.5 million to one. I'd venture to say throwing your dough around sheep corrals full of woolies is that good a bet and maybe a tad better.

Veterinarians prescribe detergent for bloat in cattle, and I overheard a guy say once in a saddle shop that it was good for washing down your saddle. But you can't tell what people are going to use for human or animals medicines. For years and years, a herder over in Mertzon claimed he knew a

married couple out in New Mexico who had a teaspoon of DDT every morning with a glass of Coca Cola for their health.

I'm going to stick with what's working and hedge a few of my bets on the lottery. Before it's over we may regret having legalized gambling, but horse racing and big drawings are a lot more fun than working sheep.